AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A nucleic acid vector for the expression of at least two cistrons comprising:

a. a promoter operably linked to a nucleotide sequence comprising at least two cistrons; and

b. a nucleotide sequence that provides IRES activity operably linked to each cistron subsequent to the first cistron, wherein at least one of the nucleotide sequences that provide IRES activity comprises a nucleotide sequence chosen from:

a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 1-215 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 45-239 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 45-215 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 1-74 and 187-239 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 1-74 and 187-215 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence that differs from a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 1 by substitution of the nucleotides at positions 124-127 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 2;

a nucleotide sequence that differs from a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 2 by substitution of the nucleotides at positions 136-139 of SEQ ID NO. 2; and

a nucleotide sequence that differs from a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 2 by substitution of the nucleotides at positions 126-129 of SEQ ID NO. 2.

2. (Previously Presented) The nucleic acid vector of claim 1, wherein at least one of said at least two cistrons comprises a reporter gene.

3. (Previously Presented) The nucleic acid vector of claim 1, wherein at least one of said at least two cistrons comprises a therapeutic gene.

4. (Previously Presented) A viral vector capable of expressing at least two cistrons comprising the nucleic acid vector of claim 1.

5. (Previously Presented) The viral vector of claim 4, wherein said viral vector is selected from poxvirus, adenovirus, herpesvirus, adeno-associated virus, retrovirus, and baculovirus.

6-11. (Canceled)

12. (Previously Presented) An isolated eukaryotic host cell comprising the nucleic acid vector of claim 1.

13. (Previously Presented) The host cell of claim 12, wherein said host cell is an insect cell.

14. (Previously Presented) The host cell of claim 13, wherein said insect cell is a Drosophila cell.

15-16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously Presented) An *in vitro* method for expressing at least two cistrons comprising: introducing into a host cell a nucleic acid vector comprising:

a. a promoter operably linked to a nucleotide sequence comprising at least two cistrons; and

b. a nucleotide sequence that provides IRES activity operably linked to each cistron subsequent to the first cistron, wherein at least one of the nucleotide sequences that provide IRES activity comprises a nucleotide sequence chosen from:

a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 1-215 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 45-239 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 45-215 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 1-74 and 187-239 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 1-74 and 187-215 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence that differs from a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 1 by substitution of the nucleotides at positions 124-127 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 2;

a nucleotide sequence that differs from a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 2 by substitution of the nucleotides at positions 136-139 of SEQ ID NO. 2; and

a nucleotide sequence that differs from a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 2 by substitution of the nucleotides at positions 126-129 of SEQ ID NO. 2.

18-19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously Presented) A baculovirus transfer vector for the expression of at least two cistrons comprising:

a. a polyhedrin promoter operably linked to a nucleotide sequence comprising at least two cistrons; and

b. a nucleotide sequence that provides IRES activity operably linked to each cistron subsequent to the first cistron, wherein at least one of the nucleotide sequences that provide IRES activity comprises a nucleotide sequence chosen from:

a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 1-215 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 45-239 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 45-215 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 1-74 and 187-239 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 1-74 and 187-215 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence that differs from a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 1 by substitution of the nucleotides at positions 124-127 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 2;

a nucleotide sequence that differs from a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 2 by substitution of the nucleotides at positions 136-139 of SEQ ID NO. 2; and

a nucleotide sequence that differs from a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 2 by substitution of the nucleotides at positions 126-129 of SEQ ID NO. 2.

21. (Previously Presented) The baculovirus transfer vector of claim 20, wherein at least one of at least two cistrons comprises a reporter gene.

22. (Previously Presented) The baculovirus transfer vector of claim 20, wherein at least one of at least two cistrons comprises a therapeutic gene.

23. (Previously Presented) A recombinant baculovirus capable of expressing at least two cistrons in an isolated host cell comprising a baculovirus genome comprising:

a. a polyhedrin promoter operably linked to a nucleotide sequence comprising at least two cistrons; and

b. a nucleotide sequence that provides IRES activity operably linked to each cistron subsequent to the first cistron, wherein at least one of the nucleotide sequences that provide IRES activity comprises a nucleotide sequence chosen from:

a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 1-215 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 45-239 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 45-215 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 1-74 and 187-239 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 1-74 and 187-215 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence that differs from a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 1 by substitution of the nucleotides at positions 124-127 of SEQ ID NO. 1;

a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 2;

a nucleotide sequence that differs from a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ

ID NO. 2 by substitution of the nucleotides at positions 136-139 of SEQ ID NO. 2; and

a nucleotide sequence that differs from a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO. 2 by substitution of the nucleotides at positions 126-129 of SEQ ID NO. 2.

24. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ An *in vitro* method for producing a recombinant baculovirus capable of expressing at least two cistrons comprising:

a. introducing a baculovirus transfer vector of claim 20 and a baculovirus genomic DNA into a baculovirus host cell so as to effect homologous recombination; and

b. isolating a recombinant baculovirus.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, wherein said recombinant baculovirus is isolated by selecting plaques expressing at least one of said at least two cistrons.

26. (Previously Presented) An isolated baculovirus host cell expressing at least two cistrons comprising the recombinant baculovirus of claim 23.

27-53. (Canceled)